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ABSTRACT

The opinions of students, faculty, and professional associations concerning the role of the University of Alberta in the development of ethical standards were examined by a Senate Task Force on Ethics. One objective was to raise awareness about ethical issues related to teaching, research, community service, and other activities. Reasons for a renewed interest in moral education include: national and international issues such as poverty and the arms race that raise value questions, the recognition that scientific progress has outpaced ethical and social considerations, and the failure of schools to adequately deal with either religion or values education. In addition to reviewing ethical guidelines and the teaching of ethics at the University of Alberta, 106 faculty from 52 departments were surveyed about how ethics and values issues were addressed in their departments and what approaches were needed. The survey of 17 associations covered trends in complaints to the agencies about ethical matters, professional standards of conduct and courses on these standards offered by the association, and whether colleges should teach ethics. Finally, views of 1,025 students were obtained about academic honesty and ethics in the university and the professions. Included are eight recommendations and the student questionnaire. (SW)

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Task Force on Ethics

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ETHICS

ETHICS

April 1985

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A. RATIONALE FOR A TASK FORCE ON ETHICS

In a world that grows more complicated daily, we need people in the professions, in industry, in labour and in business with principles or values to ensure rules of action, integrity, justice, fairness and idealism. However difficult it may be, a university must try to transmit values. While desire and reality may never meet, it is important that we never lose sight of the desire for whatsoever things are true, as dreams often transform reality. We must, of course, teach the young how to read, but we should also teach them what is worth reading and especially how that "worth" is determined.

Peter Savaryn, Chancellor
University of Alberta
Installation Address, July 6, 1982.

A.1 INTRODUCTION

When disturbing trends are seen in society a university has a responsibility to re-examine its role in relation to these issues and to clarify its responsibilities. Society today faces dilemmas of far greater complexity than any previous era. The high level of unemployment in our country raises questions about the whole economic structure upon which our society is based. The debate has just begun concerning Canada's Charter of Rights, with questions about individual rights, provincial rights and the best interest of the nation as a whole. One can observe an increasing polarization among groups with different beliefs, at times leading to violence. It is clear that the great advances in technology which have occurred in many fields, for example in computers, have produced new problems of an ethical nature. Recent scientific advancement in human engineering raises questions related to the nature of man, and life itself. And the whole question of the nuclear arms race with its associated problem of survival is an ethical issue fearful to contemplate.

Who will make the decisions with regard to these issues? Do citizens have the ability to deal with questions of this scope? All of society's institutions should ask themselves what their respective roles should be in assisting individuals to make the critical decisions which will be needed.

If a university accepts the traditional view that part of its role as a leading institution of society includes a responsibility for social criticism, it must periodically evaluate its performance of that function. Undoubtedly there are university faculty members who are involved in scholarly efforts related to these and other current ethical issues. But is that enough?

Concerns like these led to the establishment by the Senate of a Task Force on Ethics. As stated in the Universities Act of 1976, "it is the duty of a Senate to enquire into any matter that might tend to enhance the usefulness of the university". In fulfillment of this mandate the Senate of the University of Alberta set for itself the challenging task of examining the opinions of students, faculty and professional associations about the role of the University in the development of ethical standards.

A.2 BACKGROUND

In the Spring of 1983, the Senate formed an Ad Hoc Committee to examine the desirability and feasibility of establishing a Senate Task Force on Ethics. The committee's work included a survey of writings on ethics and values; an examination of calendars from the University of Alberta and from other selected universities to determine the extent of course offerings in the subject; and discussions with various faculty members from the University of Alberta. The Ad Hoc Committee Report in October, 1983, concluded that individuals in society today are faced with many issues of overwhelming dimensions which demand citizens capable of making decisions of an ethical and moral nature. The committee contended that many university educated individuals will be in decision making positions dealing with issues such as euthanasia, abortion, genetic manipulation, environmental pollution, individual rights and others which raise complex ethical questions. The committee took the position that in order to assist students to deal intelligently with such dilemmas, educators surely have a particular responsibility to teach students to reason carefully about ethical questions.

The committee under the chairmanship of the Reverend Tom Leadbeater organized a presentation to Senate for the November 1983 Senate meeting. Various viewpoints on the topic were presented by faculty members Dr. Ivan DeFaveri and Dr. Roger Shiner; Mr. Richard Watts, a third year student and former editor of The Gateway, a student newspaper; and Mr. Justice Tevie Miller, a member of Senate.

Following their presentations, Senate approved the establishment of a Task Force on Ethics. The Task Force was directed to develop terms of reference which would clearly define the limits of the endeavour.

A.3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following terms of reference for the Task Force on Ethics were approved at the Senate meeting held February 17, 1984.

1. to raise the level of awareness within the University about ethical considerations, as they relate to the teaching, research, community service and other activities of the University ;

2. to seek opinions, observations, expectations as to the role of the University of Alberta in the development of ethical standards in the University community ;

3. to make appropriate recommendations.

A.4 ETHICS AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

A.4.1 Historical Perspective

The topic of moral education has been an on-going concern throughout history. Plato, for example, began the Meno by having Meno ask Socrates if virtue can be taught. Interest in the topic has ebbed and flowed through the centuries.

Until the middle of the 19th Century, North American universities were sponsored by religious denominations, and the moral development of students was an integral part of the education they provided. To a great degree a common moral code existed throughout the student body. Many college presidents presented a compulsory series of lectures designed to be instrumental in character formation, and to inspire students to use their education for the betterment of society. In addition, efforts were made to hire faculty members of impeccable moral character to serve as role models for students.

The 20th Century has been characterized by a trend to secularization of the educational system. To accommodate religious diversity in the public school system, "neutral" concepts of moral education were developed to replace instruction in religion.

Harvard University during the 1960's established a Centre for Moral Education which played an important role in the development of these "neutral" theories. In Canada many elementary and secondary public schools quickly adopted some form of Moral Values Education (MVE) based primarily on the work of psychologist, Lawrence Kohlberg.

In 1969, a Government Commission in Ontario issued a report entitled Religious Information and Moral Development, commonly known as the MacKay Report. Its task was, in part, "to study means by which character building, ethics, social attitudes and moral values and principles may best be instilled in the young". The report was based, with few exceptions, on an uncritical acceptance of Kohlberg's theory. However, before the end of the 1970's, Kohlberg himself had withdrawn many, if not most, of the claims that had made his early theory distinctive and which the MacKay Commission had accepted. This made the Commission's confident recommendations less convincing in subsequent years (DeFaveri 1983).

Hundreds of articles and books have been published during the past two decades about MVE in one or another of its forms. A book entitled Moral Education .... It Comes With The Territory, edited by David Purpel and Kevin Ryan gives a comprehensive analysis of the various theories of MVE.

"Neutral" approaches to moral education were also adopted by the public school system in Alberta. During the 1970's, the Social Studies Handbooks issued by the Department of Education to all social studies teachers in the province recommended that the "values-clarification" approach introduced by Lewis Raths and associates be used in social studies classes in the province. This approach tried to deal with value issues and claimed to offer "a concentrated concern with what ought to be". Although articles in scholarly journals had successfully shown that this approach was inadequate even while it was being introduced, it lasted for much of the decade.

Secularization was also the trend in Canadian university education during this century. Great care was taken in the establishment of the University of Alberta to ensure that it would be a non-denominational institution. Dr. Walter John's book, A History of the University of Alberta, 1908 - 1969 discusses the views of Dr. Henry Marshall Tory, the University's first president:

> *His experiences in British Columbia had confirmed Dr. Tory in the view that a new university simply could not permit religious denominations to guide its destiny.* (p.12)

As the years progressed the increasing emphasis on the scientific nature of disciplines along with the expansion and pluralization of universities rendered the explicit teaching of ethics less important. Certainly courses in moral philosophy and ethics continued at universities, but enrolment was limited to the small number of students who elected to take them.

Derek Bok, the President of Harvard University, in Beyond the Ivory Tower summarized:

> *In sum, by the mid-twentieth century, little remained of the earlier ethics of colleges and universities. Catalogues continued to speak of moral development as a prominent aim of the institution, but there was scant evidence of any serious effort to pursue this objective. In the selection of faculties, the traditional emphasis on character had given way almost completely to the demands for scholarly excellence and academic freedom. Presidential lectures on moral issues had likewise disappeared without any physical replacement, a casualty of the search for value-free learning and the reluctance to engage in any form of teaching that could be criticised as doctrinaire.* (p.121)

Through the 1960's and 70's the public in general and students in particular became more conscious of their right to an education and consequently of the responsibility of the university and government to educate them. Roger Guindon, in his presentation to the "Shaping the Future" Conference held in Toronto in 1983, contended that since society, through parents and the public and private sectors, contributes a high percentage of the financial resources provided to universities, students and university staff should be accountable in some respects to the larger community. One way to do this, he suggested, would be to emphasize the university's responsibility to help students develop a social consciousness, a traditional obligation which modern universities have neglected. Dr. Guindon proposed that universities must make every effort to ensure that the educational process encourages the development of "responsible citizenship". Universities, he said, must help students "develop for themselves a sense of moral and social values and a commitment to live by them".

A.4.2 Renewed Interest

During the past ten years there has been an upsurge of interest in the subject of moral education. A visit to any major library will indicate an impressive amount of current literature on the topic. One contributory factor has been the widespread realization that society has suffered a decline in morals and values. In recent years the unethical behaviour of individuals in a number of professions has received considerable publicity. Questionable practices have been seen in business and political life.

A concern for appropriate behaviour has arisen in several social contexts. There is distress over the increased violence in our society, much of which emanates from racial tension. The report of the Minister's Committee on Tolerance and Understanding has made us eminently aware of its seriousness. It raises the question of

how do we help children and people in general to accept the religious and cultural diversity in our society, and to understand that difficulties are not resolved by violence.

The media also has focussed attention on national and international issues. Hardly a week goes by without some observations on matters such as unemployment, environmental pollution, poverty, starvation or the arms race. These are complex issues which give rise to questions about the total value structure of society in relation to survival.

The allocation of finite resources is another area which will demand a high level of ethical awareness in decision making. Resource limitations are causing our political leaders to face critical questions concerning the quality of medical care, the quality of education and the quality of life in general in our country.

And what of law? While it is apparent that the majority of the population believes in the rule of law, at times what is legal stops short of what is ethical or just. The law, particularly in light of Canada's new Constitution, has raised questions about the rights of individuals, and their rights in the context of what is good for society as a whole.

The recognition that scientific advancement has outpaced ethical and social considerations is another cause of the renewed interest in moral education. This is true of all scientific fields but is perhaps most noticeable in medicine. With almost daily reports of technological advances, we are becoming more aware of the need to make judgement calls in research and treatment. As procedures such as organ transplants, artificial insemination and genetic engineering become more commonplace, society will need to resolve questions about the impact of these developments on humanity.

Another reason for the reawakening of interest in moral education is the failure of the educational system to deal adequately with either religion or values education. Education in morals and values was traditionally the responsibility of the family and the church. The decline in influence of both these institutions created a vacuum which the educational system has attempted to fill. There is a widespread impression, however, that the worthy attempts at moral education in the schools have been misguided or even counter-productive (Yonge 1984). The recent controversy in Alberta concerning private schools has raised questions as to the adequacy of the public school system in this regard. The motivation for the establishment of many private schools was the desire to reinstate either a religious or moral dimension to education. It is not the Task Force's intention to assess the rights and roles of private schools in a pluralistic society. However, the issue has highlighted the need to reassess the role of the schools in the transmission of values.

In 1984 the Alberta Minister of Education commissioned a review of secondary education in the province. The review process included affirmation of broad aims of education as well as more specific goals. One of the broader purposes of education as stated was :

> *to develop a sense of purpose in life and ethical or spiritual values which reflect the worth of the individual, justice, fair play, and fundamental rights, responsibilities and freedoms.*

In a recent Alberta Gallup Poll on educational issues, this purpose was rated as very important by 93% of respondents. If society expects the educational system to play a major role in the transmission of ethics and values, universities, and especially faculties of education, face a very grave responsibility.

A.4.3 Renewed Responsibilities

Many universities have developed statements of purpose for their institutions. The goals and objectives usually refer in some way to the provision of a liberal education, which includes, as one element, encouraging the development of critical thinking and ethical judgement.

The University of Alberta Senate's Commission on University Purpose states :

> *A university education should foster ... understanding of humanistic values and approaches, moral and ethical problems, social responsibility and broad interdisciplinary perspectives.* (p.41)

McMaster University Senate Policy Statements, 1984 includes :

> *The primary pursuits of the university are to disseminate and to further knowledge at the highest intellectual levels, to inculcate the habits of critical thinking and judging and to contribute to the cultural, moral, spiritual and social wellbeing of mankind.* (p.2)

The "Aims and Objectives of the University of Guelph describe a liberal education as one which should encourage "the development of intellectual, moral and aesthetic maturity through a combination of breadth and depth of study". Moral maturity as defined

> *involves a sensitivity to questions of individual and social responsibility, and ability to distinguish moral judgements from expressions of personal and conventional preference ... an appreciation of the difficulty of resolving complex issues, and a disposition to remain tolerant to opposing moral views without thereupon becoming tolerant of serious wrongdoing ... Developing moral maturity is not a process of indoctrination in accordance with a rigid code. Yet neither is it a matter of encouraging blindness to the major ideas which have influenced, and do influence, our moral views.*

Although an understanding of ethics appears to be a stated goal of many universities, educators today are recognizing a need for more emphasis on this element of higher education.

Much current literature is devoted to the theme that universities have a responsibility to play an important role in ethics education. Mary Louise McBee, Academic Vice-President of the University of Georgia, in her article "The Values Development Dilemma", discusses the issue :

> *Does higher education have a responsibility to transmit moral and ethical values to the youth with whom it works?*

> *In a society that depends for its strength on free citizens who must be able to make difficult moral choices, we need to find ways to assist and prepare them for these tasks ... An educated person should be able to consider and judge evidence, examine assumptions, evaluate and prefer one thing over another and know why, and have values that are his own and that are developed logically and rationally. Higher education must play a role in this development.*

In the same article she asserts that the teaching of ethics as content, and the demonstration of ethics by faculty serving as models, is a responsibility of higher education :

> *I believe that this dual role is higher education's responsibility and that our failure to perform well in these two roles is in part responsible for the ethical problems of the past ten to twenty years. Higher education probably cannot go back to its moral/religious role of two hundred years ago. Nor can it maintain its current detachment from responsibility in the moral development of students.*

Adele Simmons, President of Hampshire College says that universities must help students face critical questions and not succumb to the tendency to detach oneself from problems which appear overwhelming.

> *I believe that today's undergraduates will need an unprecedented breadth of knowledge and richness of imagination. The technical and moral subtleties of the decisions they will face can leave one defenceless before the temptation simply to renounce personal responsibility. Undergraduate education must prepare the student not to walk away from choices, not to leave them to "the experts".*

Universities need to pay more attention to their role as the conscience of society, says George Pedersen, President of the University of British Columbia. In his paper entitled "Public Relations and Ethics in Higher Education", presented at the 1983 Conference on "Shaping the Future", Dr. Pedersen stated that universities have a special responsibility to pursue the truth, and play an exemplary role in society.

> *Universities must strive to become "open institutions" - institutions that serve as forums for social debate, institutions that provide ideas for society to consider in making decisions in all areas of human development, institutions that try to serve as laboratories for democratic practices, institutions that try to behave ethically, according to the highest standards of human behaviour.*

Since enrollment in postsecondary institutions is currently greater than ever before, Derek Bok in Beyond The Ivory Tower maintains that universities have a particular opportunity for influence :

> *At a time of such dissatisfaction and concern over the level of ethical behaviour in society, there is every reason for educational institutions to consider how they might use their strategic position to encourage students to think more deeply about ethical issues and strengthen their powers of moral reasoning. (p.116)*

As seen in these examples it is clear that many educators are calling upon universities to recognize their important role in the development of ethical standards and to emphasize ethics education in their institutions.

B. THE STUDY

B.1 METHODOLOGY

The terms of reference for the Task Force inquiry were approved by Senate in February of 1984. Senate recognized that ethics is a topic about which there are divergent views, and that care should be taken to seek both positive and negative reaction to the issues.

To carry out the work of the Task Force, three sub-committees were established: a SURVEY COMMITTEE, to obtain the opinion of faculty members of the University of Alberta, of professional associations in the Edmonton area, and of other Canadian universities; a QUESTIONNAIRE COMMITTEE, to develop a mechanism for obtaining the opinion of the University of Alberta students; and a RESOURCE COMMITTEE to survey literature on the topic and provide background material for the Task Force.

In April 1984 the Survey Committee developed a letter and short questionnaire which was sent to Department Chairmen, asking them to distribute copies to other interested members of their departments. They were asked the following questions :

1. In what ways are issues dealing with ethics and values addressed in the programs offered by your department?
2. In your opinion, is this adequate?
3. If not, what suggestions do you have for developing more effective methods of assisting students to think critically about ethical issues?

A second letter of inquiry was sent to various professional associations asking that the questions listed be discussed with members of the group. Questions were asked pertaining to their perceptions about an increase or decrease in ethical problems, how the association was involved in setting professional standards, and comments about the responsibility of the university in this general area.

Another questionnaire was sent to the presidents of 26 Canadian universities which offer both liberal arts and professional programs. The inquiry solicited opinion about the level of concern, the ways in which ethical issues were dealt with in their universities, and views in general about the responsibility of a university in ethics education.

The Questionnaire Committee was responsible for developing an instrument to sample the opinion of students at the University of Alberta. A pilot questionnaire was given to a sample of Spring Session students in 1984. The final questionnaire contained 41 statements to which degrees of agreement or disagreement could be marked on a five point scale. Once it was approved by the University Committee on Ethics and Human Research, it was administered to more than one thousand students during October and November.

The Resource Committee conducted a survey of literature on the topic of ethics, and acted as a resource to Task Force members throughout the inquiry. The Committee provided a historical perspective on the role of the university in relation to the teaching of ethics, as well as a variety of viewpoints from current literature regarding a university's responsibilities.

Each committee met regularly through the year to tabulate responses, share information and plan the next phase of its work. In January, February and March of 1985, the Task Force as a whole held several meetings to review the information gathered, develop recommendations, and compile the Task Force Report.

B.2 PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION

From the outset there was some hesitation about calling the Task Force "Task Force on Ethics", recognizing that words such as "ethics" and "morals" and "morality" mean different things to different people. Dr. Yonge in his submission to the Task Force suggested that the difficulty arises not from the literal meaning of the words, but "from the disagreeable connotations commonly attached to them". Their literal meaning is almost identical, with "moral" being derived from Latin, and "ethic" from Greek.

Members of the Task Force studied many definitions of "ethics", and have attempted to provide a working definition for the sake of clarity in the Report. The Oxford Dictionary defines ethics as "the science of morals, moral principles, rules of conduct, whole field of moral science". The Task Force in this report has used the words "ethics" and "morals" interchangeably to refer to a code of values which guides behaviour. Ethics as a science is understood to deal with the study of those values which in practice would lead to what is best for human life collectively.

"Ethics Education" is a term used throughout the report. Ethics education involves devoting conscious attention to raising a level of awareness about ethical issues, and facilitating the respectful examination of different points of view. Ethics education as understood by the Task Force calls for objectivity and study in an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding.

Derek Bok suggests that the aim of this type of education should be to "encourage students to perceive ethical issues, identify the competing arguments, evaluate these contending views, and ultimately arrive at thoughtful reasoned conclusions". (p.123)

B.3 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The Senate in establishing a Task Force on Ethics was not reacting to implied criticism of the University for a lack of concern for ethics, but rather wished to study the level of awareness about ethical matters which exists, and to try to clarify the proper role for the University. One of the submissions to the Task Force suggested that Senate, in the establishment of a Task Force on Ethics, had "succumbed to the influence of a relatively small segment of our society which believes that it is their duty to reshape the ethics of society to their particular viewpoint". This was never the intention of the Task Force. It was not the purpose of the Task Force on Ethics to promote the "instilling" of specific ethics, but rather to raise the level of awareness about ethical issues and to examine a university's responsibility in this area.

The Task Force did not attempt to undertake an in-depth, systematic study of each area of the University of Alberta with regard to ethics; but sought to obtain a general impression of ethical guidelines in existence, what was being done in the way of ethics education, and student expectation and experience. The report contains more information about certain departments or faculties than others, because individuals within some departments chose to provide more detailed information. The Task Force did not provide its definition of ethics to those involved in the inquiry, and recognizes that the majority of responses are subjective in nature.

C. UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Information about the attention given at present to the ethical dimension of education within the University of Alberta was derived in part from an examination of relevant documents and the course content of some programs.

C.1 ETHICAL GUIDELINES

There are a number of documents - guidelines, codes of conduct, bylaws or policy statements - within the university and professional communities which provide an indication of their stance on ethical matters.

The handbook of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (3rd Edition 1979) has a section which sets guidelines on professional ethics for university teachers. The guidelines are intended only to give direction to faculty members. Implementation of any code of professional ethics lies with the individual college or university. The issues discussed include : scholarly goals and objectives, fairness to students, confidentiality of information, academic freedom and obligations in relation to publications.

Although the agreement of the Association of Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AAS:UA) sets out standards of performance, it does not deal specifically with ethical matters. A committee of the Association has examined the possibility of drafting a code of ethics but to date has not proceeded further.

All professions have documents which govern standards of practice. Study of these guidelines and standards are incorporated to various degrees in the curricula of professional programs, usually in the final year of study.

The following examples provide an indication of the matters usually dealt with in these Codes of Ethics.

The Guide to Professional Practice of the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta presents as article #1 of the Code of Ethics : "A professional engineer, geologist or geophysicist shall recognize that professional ethics is founded upon integrity, competence and devotion to service and to the advancement of human welfare. This concept shall guide his conduct at all times." In addition, the document outlines the duties of the professional to his client or employer, to the profession, and discusses matters such as unprofessional conduct and disciplinary procedures. The Code of Ethics of the Canadian Medical Association and that of the Canadian Dental Association discuss responsibility to the patient, to the profession and to society. The Canadian Association of Social Workers (1983) Code of Ethics refers to the philosophy, purpose and accountability of the profession, the standards of practice and responsibilities to the client, the profession and society.

The responsibility for guidelines in relation to research at the University of Alberta lies with the University Research Policy Committee. This committee recently established an Ad Hoc Committee on Research Ethics to draft a policy paper setting principles and regulations with regard to scientific fraud. There is also a General Policy Committee on Human Research which has established ethical guidelines for human research in a clinical, behavioural or social framework. It deals as well with certification of the ethical acceptability of some individual research projects. In many cases faculty or departmental ethics committees, under the guidance of the General Policy Committee, have the responsibility for evaluating the ethical acceptability of research proposals.

Some faculties and departments have found it necessary to develop their own policies concerning academic dishonesty. For example, the Chairman of the Department of Computing Science recently found it necessary to develop some explicit policy statements. The departmental document identifies four types of academic dishonesty - plagiarism, academic fraud, academic theft and cheating on examinations - and it clarifies for students and faculty members appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

A code of student behaviour appears in each issue of the University Calendar and must be publicized at least once annually in The Gateway. It describes in detail academic and non-academic offences, penalties and the administrative procedures to be used in dealing with a breach of the code.

C.2 TEACHING OF ETHICS

It was not the mandate of the Task Force to undertake a comprehensive investigation of the ethics education component of every faculty within the University of Alberta. While some faculties have consciously developed an ethical dimension in their programs, in other faculties and departments the emphasis on ethics education appears to depend very much upon individual instructors.

Individual professors within the Faculty of Arts informed the Task Force that ethical issues may be studied in context in many programs. For example, in literature courses students may be asked to discuss the moral position of an author; in languages or in history ethical issues may arise directly or indirectly as part of the course material. The Department of Religious Studies and the Department of Philosophy have several courses with a focus on ethics and values in a variety of contexts. Most professional faculties appear to have, at the least, in the final year of the program a few lectures dealing with ethics and standards of practice.

The University of Alberta Faculty of Law has a compulsory course in professional responsibility which may be taken in second or third year. It is conducted in small group seminars with highly respected practitioners and members of the judiciary serving as faculty. In addition, members of the Law Society act as guest lecturers, bringing actual situations to students for discussion. In both cases, the aim is to help students develop an understanding of the kinds of ethical problems and dilemmas which may arise in the legal field.

In the Faculty of Education ethical issues are said to be addressed in a number of ways. Five senior courses in Educational Foundations have a particular focus on ethical and moral issues and may be taken as an option in the Bachelor of Education program. In other courses, ethical issues are integrated into the subject matter. The development of values and morals in students may be examined in the context of courses dealing with schools as socializing agencies. In study of the history of education, students may become aware of values held by cultures in different periods of time. Topics such as equality of educational opportunity, or the responsibility of teachers to students and parents involve discussion of moral questions. Ethical concepts are an integral part of any course dealing with actual classroom teaching practice. At the graduate level, all students in counselling work through a module on ethical and professional issues.

In the Faculty of Business there does not appear to be a special focus on ethics education, but ethical considerations are an integral part of some courses. The Task Force was told that "value" issues arise quite consistently in about 20% of case studies discussed in classes in Marketing, often in relation to advertising or market research. A faculty member in the Department of Finance and Management referred to efforts made to point out differences between legality and morality in financial policies and actions.

The Task Force was told that many professors in the Faculty of Engineering touch upon ethical questions related to the topics they are teaching, and discuss the proper conduct for a professional engineer in various situations. Students in their final year are made aware of the profession's Code of Ethics.

The faculties of Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing and the Bachelor of Education program in Faculté St. Jean provided the Task Force with detailed outlines of the ethical component in their programs.

In the Faculty of Medicine, a course in Medical Ethics and Jurisprudence is offered to students in first, second and third year of medical school. The overall objective is to give the student an understanding of the rules and responsibilities of medicine as a profession. In second year, the main objective is to provide the student with detailed information about a physician's responsibility to the individual patient. Considerable emphasis is put on discussing practical situations in an effort to develop a clear understanding of appropriate legal and ethical approaches to resolving dilemmas. The ethical component of study in third year (Phase III) concentrates on detailed information as to the various laws which affect the practice of medicine. Also discussed are negligence and malpractice, a physician's relationship with other professions and with hospitals, and other difficult ethical and legal problems. In addition, senior medical students have daily contact with patients and practising physicians, and frequently observe or are involved in decisions of an ethical nature.

Many hospitals have established Ethics Committees during the past few years. For example, the University of Alberta Hospitals have an Ethics Consultative Committee composed of doctors, senior nurses, a pastor, the head of Psychological Services, the manager of Social Services, an administrator and a lawyer. This committee deals with issues such as the ethics of buying and selling organs for transplantation, and matters of life and death in relation to support systems.

The committee has sponsored a number of lectures from visiting doctors specializing in the field of ethics. These are generally well attended by medical students as well as practitioners.

In the Faculty of Pharmacy efforts are made to include an ethical component in each year of the program. The first year encompasses a discussion with the Dean and the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association of moral and ethical obligations, guest lectures from practising pharmacists on a variety of topics, small group discussions with regard to contraceptive products, and consideration of one's right to personal beliefs. In second year, there is discussion of pharmacist - patient relationships, non-prescription drugs, the underlying needs of patients seeking self-medication, and of jurisprudence and legal issues. During third and fourth years, ethical issues are touched upon in workshops and small group discussions with special attention to the needs of seniors and the safe and effective use of drugs.

The Dean of the Faculty of Nursing reports that ethics is an important component in the faculty because of the increasing number of ethical dilemmas faced by health professionals. In the first year of the Basic Program students are introduced to the topic of ethics in relation to nursing practice. This includes an examination of what ethics is, and factors to be considered in identifying components of an ethical dilemma. Selected video-tapes depicting common ethical situations, discussion of case studies, and analysis of actual cases through conferences are methods used in the first year. In the second year of the Basic Program, the focus tends to be on legal issues, patients' rights in relation to nursing practice, and ethical issues related to reproduction, such as contraception, genetic counselling, artificial insemination, invitro fertilization and abortion.

In the third year of the Basic Program a great deal of emphasis is placed on ethical issues related to patients with more complex problems, many involving life support systems. In fourth year clinical courses there are no specific classes dealing with ethics. However, ethical issues and values are addressed in clinical groups as they apply to a student's individual experiences. In the course on Issues and Trends in Nursing, students learn to use a model for analyzing ethical dilemmas, as presented by Curtin and Flaherty in their text book on Nursing Ethics. In the research courses in the Basic Program, students are taught about the importance of informed consent.

Students in the post-RN Baccalaureate Program are expected to enter with some understanding of ethics in nursing. In this program, attention is given to the process of values clarification, to ethical dilemmas which are encountered in community health nursing and to awareness of one's personal values system. In the Masters Program, students have extensive readings and take part in discussions about moral and ethical behaviour and absolute versus relative values. In research courses and in conducting their own research, graduate students must include a section on the ethical aspects of research, and ensure that informed consent is obtained from subjects who are asked to participate in research studies.

The co-ordinator of the Bachelor of Education Program at Faculté St. Jean reports that their education professors feel a keen responsibility to assist students to think critically about ethical issues in order to develop for themselves a sense of moral and social values. Instructors have devoted considerable time and energy to elaborating on a philosophy of education which serves as the basis of the program and course activities. At the level of general objectives, the program states that the graduands must have achieved

a level of intellectual, aesthetic, moral and social maturity that will allow them to assume primary responsibility for their own intellectual development and enable them to communicate knowledge to others. This general objective is further developed to include such statements as: "Students need to be made aware that all human actions arise from certain moral values, and that there must be integration of these values."

To apply this philosophy, students in the program in the secondary route are now asked to take Educational Foundations 452 which deals mainly with the philosophy of education. Works by Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Montessori, Whitehead, Dewey, Maritain and others are brought in as stimulants and models for critical thought concerning the aim of education, the nature of man, and questions of values and non-values in man's behaviour. Phase I of the practicum reserves four complete weeks for the development by the student of a personal philosophy of education. This philosophy is then used as a basis upon which to build a critical understanding of the ethical and moral responsibilities of the practising teacher before approaching practical experience. Another course deals directly with the teaching of values in the school system, and two other courses deal with critical thinking and the development of personal and social values in schools.

D. SURVEY OF FACULTY, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A survey of opinion of faculty members was conducted in April, 1984. Brief questionnaires were circulated to Department Chairmen with a request to distribute them to any faculty members who were interested in responding. The questionnaire sought the opinion of faculty members about what does exist, and what should or should not exist, with regard to ethics education. The Task Force recognized that it was dealing with subjective opinion, and that the interpretation of statistical data would yield only a general impression of the situation.

D.1 CURRENT SITUATION

One hundred and six responses were received from members of 52 departments. There are approximately 100 departments in the University. A summary of the responses follows :

Question #1 asked how issues dealing with ethics and values were addressed in departmental programs.

It was the opinion in a small number of the responses that ethics education was not carried out in any manner in their departments. However, this view was not consistent among all of the responses from within the same department.

About one quarter of the respondents noted that their department had courses or parts of courses which dealt with ethics. The departments of Philosophy and Religious Studies offer several courses in which ethics is the focus. Respondents from Educational Foundations referred to a number of specific courses dealing with ethical matters. Some exposure to ethics education appears to be a requirement for all students in professional faculties, usually at a senior level of study.

Faculty members from Dentistry, Engineering, Faculté St. Jean, Home Economics, Law, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy and Physical Education referred to required courses or a series of lectures within a required course which dealt with ethics and standards of practice.

About two-thirds of the respondents indicated that ethics, while not the main focus of a course, was addressed in the context of the subject matter. Reference was made to ethics being an "integral part" of a course, or taught "indirectly" within the curriculum. A respondent from East Asian Languages stated that ethics was "woven into the fabric of the course". Several individuals observed that the extent to which ethical issues were discussed was dependent upon the initiative of a particular instructor. The emphasis, or lack of it, on an ethical component may vary considerably within a single department, or even in different sections of a single course.

Several professors mentioned that they discussed ethics in relation to research. They attempted to impart to students the importance of truth, accuracy, honesty and exactness, and to emphasize the immorality and consequences of deliberate misrepresentation of data.

Some professors indicated that they tried to serve as exemplary models for their students. They felt it was important to exhibit a high level of ethical behaviour in dealing with issues and in their relations with students.

Question #2 asked the respondent's opinion about the adequacy of whatever their department did in the way of ethics education.

That ethical issues were dealt with satisfactorily in their department, was acknowledged in 30% of responses; 17% said "probably"; 44% felt that ethics was not dealt with adequately; and 9% either did not know, or did not respond to the question.

D.2 EXPECTED ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Question #3 asked for suggestions for more effective methods of assisting students to think critically about ethical issues and elicited faculty opinion about what SHOULD exist.

The perceptions of faculty members with regard to the role of the university in ethics education covered a broad range. Many faculty members felt strongly that a university has a definite responsibility to teach ethics, while others were vehement in their opinion that a university should not be involved.

The following quotations represent the variety of viewpoints expressed in the submissions.

Those who did not believe that a university should take responsibility for ethics education raised a number of significant points. For example, the difficulty of teaching ethics in a multicultural society was pointed out :

> *We must be careful about a university trying to shape ethics and morality for the community*

as a whole, because different people have different conceptions of morality and ethics. There are cultural differences in ethics and morality. Which culture or point of view is correct?

Others referred to the fact that an individual's ethical standards are established much earlier in life :

I frankly do not believe it is our function to teach ethical philosophy as an integral part of university courses ... I don't believe it should be a goal in itself. The ethics systems of our university-age students are already in place and are basically unalterable at that age. The teaching of ethics must be done much earlier to have an effect on life patterns.

The possibility of indoctrination, or the personal bias of an instructor, was seen as another problem :

University professors are, other than in intelligence, like the general population, and include some people who lack good moral judgement. Students should not have to run the risk of being taught ethics by such instructors!

In God's name, no potted required courses in ethics and values! This results in brainwashing, not critical thinking, in promoting "acceptable" attitudes, not hard thinking.

Another point raised was that courses in ethics will not make one ethical :

No one becomes ethical merely by teaching or taking a course on ethics. The problem is larger than what one department can, or does offer. Every course ought to be an ethical exercise. So long as professors persist in teaching courses rather than teaching students the problem will remain.

A need for both students and teachers to have sufficient background in order to discuss ethical issues constructively, was noted :

> *What the school system is doing is trying to force young people to form judgements on very complex problems in a simplistic way when they have neither the interest nor the maturity to fully comprehend the issues on which the judgement is required. Generally the teachers are at the same level. The result is usually an analysis which is critical of society and which breeds a lack of appreciation of established customs and institutions, and a pervasive cynicism about society as a whole.*

Equally strong submissions supported the view that universities do have a critical role to play in the development of ethical standards. Following are several examples :

- *I am concerned about students being highly educated in specialized fields without being sensitized to the moral responsibilities attendant upon the utilization of their education.*

- *Courses are needed to present ethical issues of particular relevance to engineers and workers in the natural sciences. The student/teacher ratio should be drastically reduced to foster discussion, or else there should be small tutorial groups in addition to lectures.*

- *Many people would say that you can't teach ethics. What they mean is, that you can't teach people to be ethical.*

- *The work place of a graduate is full of choices often between the right way to do something and the most expedient, or profitable. Certainly students should have some training in making the ethical choices.*

- *Student athletes must receive a liberal education at university which may assist not only critical thinking about ethical issues, but, more importantly, may develop a sense of caring about these issues.*

- *I firmly believe that those who are supposedly educated in the sciences should be aware of the interplay between science and values. A historical perspective with examples of ethical subjects being influenced by science (sometimes by misinterpretation of science) is very useful.*

- *In those faculties where ethical decisions are not part of the student's work, ethics as a subject should be part of the curriculum.*

- *There is an urgent need for a re-evaluation of teaching, especially in the liberal arts, especially as it pertains to the transmission of ethics and values. In the short term, the university could consider initiating a course in all forms of ethics (social, medical, legal, business, political etc.) which would be mandatory for first year students of all faculties.*

- *It is clear that the university should play, both by example and by instruction (not by indoctrination), a crucial role in the development of ethical standards.*

The importance of faculty members serving as an example was stressed in a number of submissions :

- *Academic staff ... must teach and show leadership - not necessarily teach the subject of expertise, but teach students and mould minds.*

- *It does no good to tell students in a course what is ethical and do the opposite in your daily routine. Academic staff has a great responsibility to provide leadership by example.*

- *Probably the best effort that can be expended is for everyone, regardless of position, to set an example of adhering to the highest of moral and ethical standards in every facet of their work.*

D.3 VIEWS ABOUT METHODS

The review of current literature reinforced a point made by a number of faculty members - that even if there is general agreement that a university needs to improve its ethics education, how best to accomplish this is a matter of considerable debate.

Certainly there is agreement that the power of example is critical, and that university faculty members, whether dealing with research data, coaching an athletic team or certifying student competence must exhibit the highest standards of integrity.

Several faculty members felt that ethical issues would be best dealt with in small discussion groups, in a tutorial or seminar format. It was pointed out, however, that some of the subject matter related to ethics is suited to didactic teaching. Basic knowledge of the ways in which philosophers have debated the fundamental issues of humanity, such as good and evil, right and wrong, or a comparison of the methods of reasoning used by the scientist and the philosopher, could be dealt with in a lecture format.

There is considerable support for the view that ethics should not be isolated into a separate course, but must be integrated into every subject. William J. Bennett in "The Teacher, The Curriculum and Values Education Development", says that to teach morals by putting the subject into a separate compartment, course or module trivializes it. He believes that by inserting it in a separate place in the curriculum students are taught, by implication, that morality is a separable and separate part of life. In his view, ethical matters should be part, although sometimes a very small part, of every course.

A submission from a member of the Faculty of Extension supports this view, suggesting that the most effective way to assist students to think critically about ethical issues is to "ensure that in all the learning activities engaged in at the university - in professional subjects, art, science, education, and all - there be a consciousness on the part of the learners, teachers and students together, of the ethical dimension of those subjects".

Derek Bok contends that special courses in applied ethics are worthwhile. He maintains that students, especially those in professions, will be better prepared by discussing ethical dilemmas prior to being faced with actual decisions when choices often need to be made under pressure.

The preferred method of dealing with ethical issues, suggested another faculty member, is an interdisciplinary approach, whereby students and professors from a variety of fields can exchange views. It was noted that the possibility of indoctrination to a particular point of view would be minimized with this format.

Regardless of method, it can be a problem to find suitably qualified instructors. It was suggested that in order for a class to be more than a mere exchange of opinion, an instructor dealing with ethics needs to have a reasonable knowledge of moral philosophy to provide the necessary theoretical background for discussion. However, theoretical knowledge alone is not considered sufficient, especially by those in professional faculties. Submissions from faculty members involved with professional education thought that for credibility it was equally important for an instructor to be actively engaged in practice of the profession.

CONCLUSIONS - FACULTY SURVEY RESPONSES

The Task Force drew the following conclusions based on study of 106 responses from faculty members, and other University documents.

1. It appears that at the University of Alberta there is great variation in the ways in which the ethics dimension of education is dealt with. When an ethics component is present, it seems to be more common for ethical issues to be addressed as an integral part of the subject matter than to be taught as a separate course or module.

2. The University of Alberta has no policy which requires all students to take courses which have a significant ethical dimension.

3. The majority of courses with a focus on ethics and values are to be found in the Departments of Philosophy and Religious Studies.

4. All professional faculties appear to have allotted some time in the curricula for attention to ethical issues. The emphasis is usually in the senior year of study. However, the amount of time devoted to ethical issues appears to vary greatly among faculties.

5. In most courses offered by the University, apart from the small number of courses with a focus on ethics, the amount of time allotted to ethical issues appears to depend upon the interest and initiative of individual instructors.

6. The Health Sciences, most notably Nursing, seem to address ethics education in a comprehensive way, and Faculté St. Jean appears to have a carefully planned approach to the ethical dimension of teacher education.

7. Opinion appears to be fairly evenly divided between faculty members who feel that ethical issues are dealt with satisfactorily at present and those who think it is not.

8. Perceptions of faculty members about what the responsibility of a university should be in ethics education cover a broad range, with strong opinion expressed both for and against the idea that a university has an obligation to foster the development of ethical standards in its students.

9. The majority of faculty members hold the view that ethical issues, when addressed, should be dealt with as an integral part of the subject matter, rather than as a separate course.

SURVEY OF ASSOCIATIONS

In order to assist the Task Force in reaching some conclusions about the University's role in ethics education, the committee decided to survey the opinions of as many professional and/or university educated groups as possible.

Twenty-six groups, representing a cross-section of professional associations, were contacted. Each was asked to provide information in answer to specific questions.

Responses were received from the following 17 associations :

Alberta Association of Architects

Alberta Association of Registered Nurses

Alberta Association of Registered Occupational Therapists

Alberta Association of Social Workers

Alberta Dental Association

Alberta Hospital Association

Alberta Medical Association

The Alberta Pharmaceutical Association

The Alberta Registered Dieticians Association

Alberta School Trustees Association

The Alberta Teachers Association

The Association of Chartered Physiotherapists

The Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists & Geophysicists of Alberta

Canadian Institute of Forestry - Rocky Mountain Section

The Law Society of Alberta

The Psychologists Association of Alberta

Speech & Hearing Association of Alberta

E.1 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

A brief analysis of the information received reveals that a variety of situations presently exist in this province. However, it is possible to extract from the responses some trends and some information about unfulfilled needs which could involve the University. Rather than identify each association specifically, the committee has attempted to collate all of the responses in relation to each of the five questions asked. Following is a summary of the responses :

Question #1. Have complaints to your association about ethical matters increased or decreased during recent years as compared to 10 years ago?

Eight organizations reported no increases, eight reported increases varying from minimal percentages to a doubling of complaints, one organization did not respond to this question. In general, while some organizations recorded an increase in complaints, many of these did not necessarily revolve around ethical considerations.

Question #2. What percentage of complaints came from members of the public? From other members of the profession?

A wide variety of answers to this question was received. Some associations reported that 80% to 90% of all complaints received were from members of the public; others reported 30% to 50%. Some reported an equal number from the public and members of the profession, while a few reported that all complaints received were from members of the profession involved. In general, more associations reported a majority of complaints coming from the public.

Question #3. Do you think there is a problem with newcomers to the profession being unclear about standards?

Seven assocations perceived problems with newcomers being unclear about ethical standards. Five saw no special problems unique to newcomers, while three were unsure.

Question #4. Does your association provide courses which deal with ethics and standards of conduct? What do they consist of? Are they mandatory for graduates in your profession?

Five groups provide formal courses on ethical matters. Twelve do not. Of the five who offer courses, four require mandatory attendance, the other does not. Of these who do not have formal courses, nine provide non-mandatory lectures given by officers or members of the association. Five include a code of ethics in a handbook distributed to all members. One association requires all its members to sign a written agreement to abide by its code of ethics.

Question #5. Should the University be responsible for assisting student members of your profession to learn about ethical concerns and standards of practice? If so, at what stage of the educational process and in what manner could this best be done?

Thirteen groups felt that the University should assume a major role in teaching ethics to aspiring professionals. Three groups felt it was a joint responsibility of the university and the professional group to teach students at the undergraduate level. One took no position. Three groups expressed the view that ethics should be introduced early in the professional program and reinforced each year thereafter. Three expressed a preference for a course in the graduating or last two years.

Two felt there should not be any formal courses but that such training should be consciously integrated into clinical and field work. Another group suggested a formal interdisciplinary course for related professions, such as health sciences, where all students in the groups would be required to take the course. Several felt that no formal courses were required but that definite rules be established requiring all instructors to deal with ethical considerations in their courses.

E.2 CONCLUSIONS - SURVEY OF ASSOCIATIONS

An analysis of the responses yields the following conclusions :

1. Complaints from the public and other members of the profession are increasing but not at any alarming rate. Some are related to present economic stresses while others are a reflection of heightened public awareness that complaints can be made to governing bodies.

2. Many groups perceive that newcomers to professional practice are unclear about the ethical standards pertaining to their professional group.

3. While all professional groups express concern that high ethical standards prevail within the group, the approach to education in this area, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, varies considerably from mandatory courses at both levels to less formal voluntary lectures and seminars.

4. There is unanimity among the associations that the University has a significant role to play in developing the proper ethical attitudes for aspiring members of each group.

5. The professional groups seem about equally divided between advocating formal courses in ethics and a less formal structure in which faculty consciously integrates ethical considerations into their courses of instruction.

6. Professional associations in general believe that the teaching of ethics should commence early in the university program and be related to practical problems.

7. Most groups would be willing to work closely with their respective faculties in designing the ethics education aspect of professional programs.

F. SURVEY OF CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

Although the main concern of the Task Force was to study the teaching of ethics at the University of Alberta, the Survey Committee decided to ask presidents of other Canadian universities for their opinions on this topic. A brief questionnaire was sent to 26 universities, believed to have both liberal arts and professional programs. The response was excellent, with 23 replies received. The following universities shared their views :

Bishop's University
Concordia University
Dalhousie University
Laval University
McGill University
McMaster University
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Queen's University
Simon Fraser University
University of British Columbia
University of Lethbridge
University of Manitoba
University of Montreal
University of New Brunswick
University of Ottawa
University of Prince Edward Island
University of Saskatchewan
University of Toronto
University of Victoria
University of Western Ontario
University of Windsor
University of Winnipeg
York University

A.1 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

No university had compulsory courses in ethics for students in all faculties. Other findings varied greatly and are discussed below in relation to each question. Replies from the universities, in some cases, were in great detail. There had been discussion with a number of faculty members and much thought and research had gone into the responses. On the other hand, many of the responses were subjective and, consequently, statistical data may be used only to gain a general impression of the situation.

Question #1. At your university, would you say there has been increasing concern with the ethical standards of students and recent graduates?

Several universities did not reply to this question. Of those that did, six replied that they had an increasing concern, while four did not. Other universities said there was no noticeable increase but acknowledged an ongoing concern with ethical standards at their universities.

Question #2. Are ethical issues dealt with satisfactorily?

a. in professional faculties?

Almost half of the universities felt that ethical issues were dealt with in a satisfactory manner at their universities, while a few stated that more could be done. Eight universities replied that the ethical issues were not given satisfactory attention.

b. in other faculties?

Opinion varied more in answer to this question, although eight universities were satisfied with their involvement in ethics. Other universities would like to see more courses required, but felt the lack of time and resources made this difficult.

Question #3. Are courses dealing with ethical issues compulsory?

a. in all faculties?

As stated before, no university has a compulsory course for all students.

b. in professional faculties?

In the professional faculties there were more positive responses, with many universities having compulsory courses in the Health Sciences, Law and Engineering. One university mentioned a compulsory graduate course in ethics for students in Business Administration, while another required an ethics course for clinical psychology.

Question #4. In general, have you noticed a demand for more emphasis on ethical issues in the curricula?

a. in all faculties?

Except for two institutions, the universities replied negatively to this question.

b. in professional faculties?

With regard to the professional faculties, more concern was expressed. One-third of the responses were in favor of more emphasis on ethical issues, while five schools felt their institutions had a sufficient number of courses. The Westminister Institute for Ethics and Human Values, associated with the University of Western Ontario, reported that there did seem to be a growing emphasis on ethical issues in curricula, especially in Nursing and Medicine. McMaster University, for example, noted that enrolment in an elective course on "moral philosophy with an emphasis on medical issues" had grown in the past eight years from 150 to over 1,000 students, and attracted students from all faculties. The interest led to the establishment of six related courses.

An opportunity was provided for additional comments about the role of a university in the development of ethical standards in students. Many and varied replies were received not only from each institution as a whole, but in some cases from several faculties within a university.

The following are pertinent quotations from some of the responses :

- *One could say that this university and very likely most others do not do enough to focus on the moral implications of the knowledge being transmitted, and do not do enough to teach students how to think about these matters.*

- *Universities should be leaders in generating critical ethical awareness.*

- *In many university programs, particularly in the arts, humanities and social sciences, but also in professional schools, moral and ethical issues and values are regularly explored and some classes are directed primarily to exploration of these issues.*

- Ethical issues on a broader front are dealt with very little in any of our programs, except in the courses labled ethics.

- Students likely take professors as models.

- It appears that individual rights are more important than ethical conduct and universities will have to try hard to reintroduce the notion of ethics.

- The university does not accept responsibility for instilling in some deliberate way moral and ethical standards (except where these are part of a professional training program). Again, the objectives state that the university's purpose is to generate in its students "an infectious eagerness for ideas and a love of truth".

- The development of genetic engineering, the development of technical ability to keep both infants and the elderly alive, but only just and at extremely high costs, will provoke the debates around euthanasia, and who should decide. The unresolved debate around abortion will continue to raise dilemmas for health professionals, and the development of genetic engineering will pose issues for the field of child welfare which have not yet been raised for discussion ... the ethicists will be in great demand in all professional schools, and as consultants to practitioners in the future.

- No professional program should be without an ethics course.

- It should also be noted that where the university makes an effort to emphasize the importance of the ethical standards of its students, the same concern must be shown in its treatment of the students, lest the concern be seen as hypocritical.

- There can hardly be any argument with the proposition that a university must play an important role in the development of ethical standards in students, presumably one of the outcomes of preparing "educated citizenry".

F.2 CONCLUSIONS - CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

1. Among Canadian universities there is considerable variation in terms of what is done in the way of ethics education, and in opinion about what should be done.

2. In general terms, about one-third of the respondents felt that their institution was doing all that could be expected in dealing with ethics education; one-third thought more should be done; and of the remainder, several indicated that even if they thought more should be done, pressures of time and lack of resources would make it difficult.

3. It was evident from the excellent response to the inquiry that there is a high level of interest across the country in the matter of a university's role in the development of ethical standards.

G. STUDENT OPINION, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

To ascertain the opinion of students about the role and responsibility of the University in their ethical development, it was decided to conduct a questionnaire survey among senior level students, that is, those who had been in attendance at university for more than two years. Following a pilot study of some 200 students attending Spring Session 1984, a questionnaire was constructed to sample student opinion in the following areas :

1. The University as an ethical influence on students
2. Academic honesty and dishonesty
3. Ethics in administration of the University
4. The University professor as an ethical influence
5. Ethics and research
6. Ethics in the professions.

In each of these areas an attempt was made not only to obtain students' expectations of the University's role and responsibility in their ethical development but, equally importantly, to assess their opinion of the impact of the University of Alberta on their own ethical development.

During the fall of 1984 the questionnaire was administered to 1,025 senior level students. The responses to the questionnaire were analyzed according to sex and faculty. The faculties considered in the analysis were as follows : Arts; Business; Education; Engineering; Health Science faculties i.e. Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Rehabilitation Medicine; Law and Science.

G.1 THE UNIVERSITY AS AN ETHICAL INFLUENCE ON STUDENTS

Student expectations about the role and responsibility of the University in assisting them to develop ethically are extremely high. Students, in fact, expect the University to contribute significantly to the formation of their ethical standards. Thus, in response to the statement, "A university education should help a student develop ethically", 82% of the total sample agreed, while only 8% disagreed. A breakdown by faculty revealed that the highest rates of agreement were found in the Faculties of Law (91%) and Health Sciences (89%), while the lowest was found in the Faculty of Education (70%). In the Faculty of Arts, the degree of agreement was 78%, and in the Faculty of Science 77%. This general finding of high expectations among students was confirmed by analysis of responses to statements 24 and 40.

It is certainly not the case, however, that students expect the "truth" in ethical matters to be passed on to them ready made; rather, they feel the University should provide them with a range of viewpoints on ethical issues. Thus, in response to the statement, "A university should make a conscious effort to expose its students to a variety of viewpoints on ethical issues", 84% of the sample agreed, while only 6% disagreed. A breakdown by faculty revealed that Health Sciences and Law students most often have high expectations of the University's responsibilities in this area (92% agreement). The lowest degree of agreement was found among Engineering students (63% agreement). In the Faculty of Arts there was 85% agreement, and in the Faculty of Science 81%.

There were no substantial differences between male and female students with respect to either of these expectations.

An analysis of student opinion concerning the actual impact of the University of Alberta upon their ethical development revealed that there is a considerable gap between what students expect from the University and what they feel they have received. In general, there exists a good deal of ambivalence among students about the effect the university has had upon their ethical development, with almost as many feeling that the university has had little or no impact on their ethical development as those who believe that it has. Thus, in response to the statement, "My university education has helped me to develop ethically", 42% of the sample agreed, while 34% disagreed. The highest proportion of agreement by faculty was found in the Health Sciences (52% agreement) and the lowest in the Faculty of Education (28% agreement). In the Faculty of Arts the degree of agreement with the statement was 47%, while in the Faculty of Science it was 36%. This general finding of student ambivalence about the effect of the University upon their ethical development was confirmed by analysis of responses to statements 12 and 31, both of which concern this general area of the impact of the University experience upon the students' ethical development.

Once again, the breakdown of the total sample by sex revealed no significant differences.

G.2 ACADEMIC HONESTY AND DISHONESTY

Students believe that questions relating to academic honesty and dishonesty are indeed ethical ones. In response to the statement "Questions involving academic honesty and dishonesty are not ethical questions", 83% of the respondents disagreed while only 6% agreed. An analysis of each faculty showed that the rates of agreement in all faculties were close to the average while disagreement ranged from 90% in Law and 88% in Business to 76% Engineering and 78% Education.

Students strongly rejected the idea that there is nothing wrong with cheating. In response to the statement "There is nothing wrong with buying essays or hiring someone to complete assignments", there was 90% disagreement and 4% agreement. An analysis of each faculty indicated the lowest rate of agreement (1%) in the Health Sciences. These findings are supported by the response patterns to statement 9.

While a large majority of students feel academic dishonesty is wrong, a substantial number feel academic dishonesty is present within the university. In response to the statement "There is a good deal of academic dishonesty going on among students at this university", 44% agreed while only 23% disagreed. One-third of the respondents (33%) were undecided. A faculty breakdown shows the highest rates of agreement from students in Science and Education (52%), while the lowest rates were from students in Arts (34%) and Engineering (36%).

Students generally feel more should be done to discourage academic dishonesty. In response to the statement, "More should be done at this university to discourage cheating and academic dishonesty", 64% agreed while only 13% disagreed. The faculties with the highest rates of agreement were Law (71%) and Health Sciences (70%). On the other hand the faculties with the lowest rates were Education (63%) and Engineering (61%). There was no significant difference in response between males and females to any of the statements.

In summary, students feel strongly that questions of academic honesty and dishonesty are ethical ones and that academic dishonesty is wrong. There is a perception that a good deal of academic dishonesty is taking place, and that the university is obliged to discourage it.

G.3 ETHICS IN ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

Approximately three-quarters (73%) of the sample agreed with the statement "A university should be run on the basis of ethical principles", and only 11% disagreed. The highest rates of agreement were found in the Health Sciences and Law faculties (84% and 81% respectively), followed closely by the Faculty of Arts (78%). In contrast, only 61% of the respondents enrolled in the Faculty of Business and 67% of the Education students agreed with this statement, although no more than 15% of each of the latter groups disagreed. The remainder were undecided. These generally high expectations were also evident in students' responses to statement 37. Only 10% agreed that "When it comes to the efficient administration of a modern university, ethical considerations should be viewed as largely irrelevant", whereas 72% disagreed.

Although a high proportion of the students surveyed expect universities to be administered along ethical lines, a much smaller percentage view this university as operating with due regard to such guidelines. 38% of the total sample disagreed with the statement, "Generally speaking, this university is run with little or no regard for ethical considerations". Fully one-fifth (22%) agreed, while two-fifths (41%) were undecided. A breakdown by faculty revealed that students enrolled in Education, Law and Business were most likely to agree with this statement (30%, 28% and 27% respectively), while those in Health Sciences least often expressed this negative perception. Moreover, Education students least often rejected this charge (20% disagreed) and one-half (51%) were undecided.

Almost two-fifths (38%) of the students in the sample were undecided about the statement, "As far as its administration is concerned, this university acts without a conscience", while 30% agreed and 32% disagreed. A comparison by faculty revealed that students in the Faculty of Law were most often in agreement with this statement (55%) and least likely to disagree (20%), followed by Education students (34% agreed; 22% disagreed). In contrast, the students least likely to concur with this description of the university's administration were those in the Health Sciences faculties. Only 19% agreed with the statement.

Only 27% of the sample agreed with the statement,"Generally speaking, this university is run with a good deal of concern and consideration for the individual", whereas 47% disagreed. 25% were undecided. Further analysis revealed that almost 75% of Law students in the sample disagreed with this statement and they were also the group least likely to agree (13%). Similarly, 63% of the sample agreed that,

"As far as this university is concerned, students are only numbers", and only 18% disagreed. Inter-faculty comparisons again found that respondents enrolled in the Faculty of Law were most apt to express this negative perception (75% agreed), followed by Education students (70%) and those in the Business faculty (68%). Again, the students who least often held such a negative opinion of this university were those engaged in Health Sciences programs (only 51% agreed with this statement).

Once again, no substantial differences were found to exist between male and female respondents in the sample.

G.4 THE UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR AS AN ETHICAL INFLUENCE

There is no doubt in the minds of many students that their university professors should exhibit exemplary behaviour. Regarding the statement, "University faculty members should be models of ethical behaviour", 60% of the total sample agreed, while 20% disagreed. Health Sciences had the highest rates of agreement (74%), followed by Law, with 70%. The Faculty of Arts had an agreement rate of 68% as did Education, while that of Science was 57%. There was no difference in perception between male and female students. The high expectations of the students regarding their professors was confirmed by analysis of the responses to statements 8 and 21.

Many students are not sure whether their professors achieve the ideal of being seen as a model of ethical behaviour. In reply to the statement, "Ethically speaking, professors at this university set a good example for their students", 41% of the total group agreed, 18% disagreed, but 41% were undecided. Students in the Arts faculty had a 48% agreement, while students in both Education and Law had 33% agreement. Faculty of Science students had 42% agreement.

In Business and Engineering, students had agreement rates of 40% and 38% respectively, and also had the highest percentages of undecided responses - Business with 48%, and Engineering with 44%. The results of the students' opinions concerning the example set by their professors was confirmed by the analysis of statement 13.

Once again there was little difference in the opinions of male and female students.

In reply to the statement, "In general, my university professors have had a positive influence on my ethical development", the opinions varied widely between students of different faculties. The overall student agreement was 39%, with 34% disagreeing. Agreement in the Engineering faculty was 56%, followed by Health Sciences 52%, Law 44%, Arts and Science 36%, Business 29% and Education 24%.

The way in which a professor approaches the subject matter of a course has an influence on students. To the statement "Generally speaking, at this university the professors do little to encourage students to consider the ethical dimensions of the subject matter", there was overall agreement of 43%, while 2[illegible] disagreed.

Fifty-four percent of students in Business, and 51% of students in both Education and Engineering felt they received very little encouragement to consider the ethical dimensions of the subject matter. Replies from Law (39% agreement), Science (35% agreement), Arts (31%) and Health Sciences (31%) indicated that students in those faculties thought professors did more in the way of emphasizing an ethical component.

G.5 ETHICS AND RESEARCH

The general area of the ethical dimension of research was by far the most controversial of those surveyed. Student opinion was almost evenly divided about the statement, "Research of any kind is worthwhile if it expands our knowledge", with 47% of students agreeing and 41% disagreeing. Considerable variation was noted in the responses of different faculties. The highest rates of agreement were found in the Faculties of Business and Science, each with 53%, and the lowest in the Health Sciences (36%).

There are some students who agree that investigative research may be carried on without moral or ethical restrictions. Considerable difference in opinion among faculties was noted. In the Health Science faculties, only 6% of students agreed with the statement, "Investigative research should not be restricted by moral or ethical considerations". The highest rates of agreement were found in the Faculties of Law (36%), and Business and Science with 26% each.

More than half of the students (53%) agreed with the statement, "All research and scientific enquiry should be conducted according to strict ethical principles". While roughly one-quarter were undecided, and one-quarter disagreed, the highest level of support was again found in Health Sciences at 67%. The lowest level of support was found in Business at 37%. In Law and Education, the level of agreement was 61%, while in the remaining faculties the distribution reflected the overall pattern.

With regard to the latter two questions, 10% more females than males supported exacting research guidelines.

It would appear that the students surveyed generally would like to see research carried out in an ethical manner, although a large number were unsure about the actual situation at this university. In response to the statement, "Generally speaking, at this university professors tend to disregard ethical considerations when planning research", 58% were undecided, while 33% disagreed. There were no marked differences of opinion between faculties or between males and females on this matter.

G.6 ETHICS IN THE PROFESSIONS

The general conviction among members of the public that the university in its education of professionals should provide formal course work addressing the ethical issues faced by the particular profession appears to be one shared by university students. Thus, in response to the statement "University students preparing for a profession should have compulsory courses in ethics relating to the profession", 69% of the sample agreed, while only 16% disagreed. Students in Law (91%) and Health Sciences (77%) showed the highest degree of agreement while the lowest was found in the Faculty of Business (58%). The agreement figures for Arts and Science were 70% and 66% respectively.

About the actual performance of the university in meeting this expectation there appears to be a good deal of ambivalence in the student body. In response to the statement, "In general, the education of professionals in this university ignores the ethical dimension of professional conduct", only 22% agreed. On the other hand, only 43% disagreed, some 35% of the sample being undecided on the matter. Faculty differences were significant and interesting. By far the greatest degree of disagreement (and thus presumably of some feeling that ethical issues are in fact addressed in professional training) was found among Law students (61%), while the lowest was in the Faculty of Education with only 28% disagreement. As far as agreement with the statement is concerned, that is, the reflection of a feeling that the university has failed to provide adequate treatment of ethical issues in its professional training, the highest proportion of agreement was found in the Faculty of Education (33%) and the lowest in the Faculty of Engineering (12%).

G.7 CONCLUSIONS - STUDENT OPINION

Based on the responses to the questionnaire administered to 1,025 senior level students, the following general conclusions were drawn.

1. Student expectation of an ethical dimension within the University of Alberta appears to be high in the following areas of inquiry :

   - the University as an ethical influence
   - academic honesty
   - ethics in administration
   - professors as an ethical influence
   - ethics in the professions

2. With regard to the area of "ethics and research", although students felt ethical considerations were important, no clear opinion was expressed about ethical conduct in research at this University. This may reflect a lack of knowledge or unfamiliarity on the part of undergraduate students with the research function of the University.

3. In general, there is a noticeable gap between the expectations of students and their corresponding assessment of the University's performance. Although it is not clear whether the responses indicate dissatisfaction, disappointment, or merely confusion, there is evidently a feeling that the ethical dimension needs improvement.

4. There appear to be marked differences of opinion between faculties with regard to the ethical dimension of university education. Two observations stand out :

   a. Students in the Health Science faculties appear to have a relatively high expectation level and a relatively high degree of satisfaction with the role of the University in their ethical development.

   b. In the Faculty of Education, student expectation in all categories of inquiry appears to be relatively low, and their assessment of the University's performance in each area is also relatively low.

5. There are few major differences between males and females with regard to expectation level or perception of the University's performance.

H. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions which deal with specific areas of the Task Force inquiry are included in preceding chapters of this Report. In this section, the Task Force wishes to highlight areas which it considers of major importance. Based on considerable reading, as well as the findings of the investigation, there was consensus among Task Force members about these conclusions.

The following conclusions relate to the level of interest in the subject of ethics :

1. The interest shown in responses from students, faculty members and associations indicates that the Task Force study has undoubtedly raised consciousness about ethical matters within the University and the community-at-large.

2. In almost all fields - educational, social, political, scientific - the current literature, conference agendae and general media content indicate a heightened awareness of the need to examine ethical issues.

The following conclusions relate to expectations about the role of the University in the development of ethical standards :

1. The University has a responsibility to place more emphasis on the development of ethical standards in students; recognizing :

   i. that the development of ethical attitudes and standards of behaviour is not a static but an ongoing process, and

ii. that skills of rational discussion and decision-making which are learned during the educational process will assist students to better cope with major ethical dilemmas later in life.

2. The University should play a significant role in raising the level of awareness about ethical concerns in the University and general community.

3. A university in all areas of endeavour - teaching, research, and relationships with students and the community - should demonstrate the highest standards of ethical behaviour.

4. In keeping with the traditional goal of a University to promote objective, rational and free inquiry, the University should provide a forum for examination of major ethical issues from a variety of perspectives, in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect.

5. The University should provide for students some background in ethical concepts as a basis for informed discussion and decision-making about ethical issues.

6. The University should better prepare teachers to deal with the ethical dimension of education, recognizing the important role that the educational system plays in an individual's ethical development.

7. The University should take a more well-defined role in the teaching of ethics to aspiring members of the professions.

The following conclusions relate to perceptions about the situation which presently exists with regard to the role of the University in the development of ethical standards.

1. There appears to be a gap between students' high expectations of the University's role in influencing ethical standards, and their perceptions of what is done within the University to fulfill this role.

2. There appears to be no consistency in the way in which ethics is included in most programs at the University of Alberta. Attention to an ethical dimension appears to depend to a great extent upon the interest and initiative of individual instructors.

3. Significant differences exist in the perceptions of students from different faculties about the ethical dimension of their university experience.

4. A perception exists that a good deal of academic dishonesty is taking place and that the University is obliged to discourage it.

5. It is widely perceived that the human and social implications of technological advances have not been given sufficient attention by the University.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No. 1

Directed to: General Faculties Council

That the University require all first year undergraduate students to take a course with an ethical component. This need not mean that every student must take one particular course, but may involve a choice from a variety of courses which have been identified as having a significant ethical dimension.

Recommendation No. 2

Directed to: The President of the University
The President of the Students' Union

That the University endeavour to generate an awareness among faculty, students and the community of the importance of the ethical dimension of education. Toward this end, the University should continue, and expand, its policy of sponsoring events which provide for interdisciplinary consideration of contemporary ethical dilemmas, such as the conference on "Canada, the World and the Future", and the Students' Union speaker series.

Recommendation No. 3

Directed to: The Board of Governors

That the University of Alberta be encouraged to develop a mission statement which would encompass its responsibility in ethics education.

Recommendation No. 4

Directed to: The Association of Academic Staff

That a code of ethics be developed by and for members of the Association of Academic Staff.

Recommendation No. 5

Directed to: General Faculties Council

That General Faculties Council require each faculty with one or more professional programs to establish a committee(s) to work closely with the related professional association in order to develop a strategy for ethics education which would meet the needs of the University and of the profession.

Recommendation No. 6

Directed to: The Vice-President (Research)

That the University continue its admirable work toward clarification of ethical guidelines in relation to different types of research, and play a greater role in the study of social and human implications of technological advances.

Recommendation No. 7

Directed to: The Dean, Faculty of Education
The Vice-President (Academic)

That the Faculty of Education should critically assess and clarify its role and responsibility, and the role and responsibility of other faculties, with regard to the ethics education of future teachers.

Recommendation No. 8

Directed to: The Senate of The University of Alberta

That the progress made with regard to these recommendations be reviewed within three years.

APPENDICES

J.1 BIBLIOGRAPHY

J.2 ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

J.3 STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE and ANALYSIS

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The Senate

The University of Alberta

September 1984

TASK FORCE ON ETHICS: QUESTIONNAIRE

The Senate Task Force on Ethics is examining the role of a university education in the development of ethical standards.
Your thoughtful response to each of the following questions will be very much appreciated.

PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER WHICH CORRESPONDS TO YOUR CHOSEN RESPONSE.

S/A Strongly Agree
A Agree
U Undecided
D Disagree
S/D Strongly Disagree

	S/A	A	U	D	S/D
1. Investigative research should not be restricted by moral or ethical considerations.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Generally speaking, this university is run with a good deal of concern and consideration for the individual.	1	2	3	4	5
3. This university does not do enough to detect and punish cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty.	1	2	3	4	5
4. A university education should help a student develop ethically.	1	2	3	4	5
5. A university should be run on the basis of ethical principles.	1	2	3	4	5
6. This university does little to inspire its students with spiritual values.	1	2	3	4	5
7. In general, my university professors have had a positive influence on my ethical development.	1	2	3	4	5
8. One should not expect university professors to be models of ethical behaviour.	1	2	3	4	5
9. There is nothing wrong with copying someone else's paper or lab results to get a good grade.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Generally speaking, at this university professors do little to encourage students to consider the ethical dimensions of the subject matter they are dealing with.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Cheating offences should be treated like parking offences, because neither involves a breach of ethics.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Attending this university has had little influence upon the development of my ethical standards.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Too many professors at this university set a poor example, ethically speaking, for their students.	1	2	3	4	5
14. As far as its administration is concerned, this university acts without a conscience.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Generally speaking, universities, including this one, have failed to use the humanities as a source of ethical truths and inspiration.	1	2	3	4	5
16. A university without a religious affiliation cannot adequately deal with the ethical development of its students.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Research of any kind is worthwhile if it expands our knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
18. University students preparing for a profession should have compulsory courses in ethics relating to the profession.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Generally speaking, this university is run with little or no regard for ethical considerations.	1	2	3	4	5
20. All research and scientific enquiry should be conducted according to strict ethical principles.	1	2	3	4	5

(over)

Questionnaire: Ethics page two

21. University faculty members should be models of ethical behaviour.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My university education has helped me to develop ethically.	1	2	3	4	5
23. More should be done at this university to discourage cheating and academic dishonesty.	1	2	3	4	5
24. The university should not be responsible for contributing to the development of my ethical standards.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Generally speaking, at this university professors tend to disregard ethical considerations when planning research.	1	2	3	4	5
26. In general, the education of professionals in this university ignores the ethical dimension of professional conduct.	1	2	3	4	5
27. At this university most students would cheat on exams if they believed they would not get caught.	1	2	3	4	5
28. At this university the programs offered do not devote enough time to social and ethical issues.	1	2	3	4	5
29. In its role of creating and disseminating knowledge, a university should not be concerned with making ethical pronouncements.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Ethically speaking, professors at this university set a good example for their students.	1	2	3	4	5
31. What is taught in this university has had very little influence on my ethical development.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Questions involving academic honesty and dishonesty are not ethical questions.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Cheating, or academic dishonesty, is ethically wrong and should be severely punished.	1	2	3	4	5
34. This university does not treat academic dishonesty as a breach of ethics.	1	2	3	4	5
35. As far as this university is concerned, students are only numbers.	1	2	3	4	5
36. This university should seek to cultivate spiritual values in its students.	1	2	3	4	5
37. When it comes to the efficient administration of a modern university, ethical considerations should be viewed as largely irrelevant.	1	2	3	4	5
38. There is a good deal of academic dishonesty going on among students at this university.	1	2	3	4	5
39. There is nothing wrong with buying essays or hiring someone to complete assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
40. What is taught in a university should be a source of ethical inspiration to students.	1	2	3	4	5
41. A university should make a conscious effort to expose its students to a variety of viewpoints on ethical issues.	1	2	3	4	5

I am registered in the Faculty of _____

I am in my _____ year of university study.
(3rd, 4th, etc.)

Age _____ Sex

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

University of Alberta
Edmonton

The Senate

Canada T6G 2J8

150 Athabasca Hall, Telephone (403) 432-2268

TASK FORCE ON ETHICS : STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

- Analysis of 1,025 responses
- Administered September and October, 1984.

Question	(S/A & A) Agree	Undecided	(D & S/D) Disagree		Question	(S/A & A) Agree	Undecided	(D & S/D) Disagree
1	20%	11%	69%		22	41%	26%	34%
2	27%	25%	47%		23	64%	24%	13%
3	39%	34%	28%		24	20%	18%	63%
4	80%	10%	10%		25	9%	57%	34%
5	73%	15%	11%		26	22%	35%	43%
6	59%	31%	10%		27	42%	20%	39%
7	39%	28%	34%		28	38%	37%	25%
8	29%	12%	59%		29	17%	25%	58%
9	6%	6%	88%		30	41%	42%	18%
10	43%	28%	29%		31	39%	18%	43%
11	6%	12%	81%		32	6%	11%	83%
12	41%	18%	41%		33	68%	18%	14%
13	19%	36%	45%		34	16%	47%	37%
14	30%	38%	32%		35	63%	19%	18%
15	22%	59%	19%		36	26%	27%	47%
16	12%	13%	75%		37	10%	19%	72%
17	46%	12%	41%		38	44%	33%	23%
18	69%	15%	16%		39	4%	6%	90%
19	22%	41%	38%		40	56%	27%	16%
20	54%	21%	25%		41	84%	10%	6%
21	61%	18%	20%					

Note : Faculty breakdown for some questions is available from the Senate Office